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Special Report

Washington's Agog Over CIA 'Who's Who'

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 27—Nothing is more precious to a spy than his cover. Sometimes years in the making and always vulnerable to exposure at the slip of a tongue, it is the secret agent's one and only passport to success.

Small wonder, then, that the publication in English of a small, red-jacketed book called "Who's Who In The CIA" is sending tremors through the U. S. intelligence community.

THE BOOK LACKS the intricacy of a John Le Carre thriller or the dash of a James Bond dossier. But its claim is stark and dramatic enough: "A biographical reference work on 3,000 officers of the civil and military branches of the secret services of the USA in 120 countries."

To the layman, the roster of names might seem laughable. Included are Lyndon Johnson, "Professor" Hubert Horatio Humphrey, George Meany and a man called Smith, who is referred to only as having been an Air Force major expelled from the USSR in 1964.

The CIA, while conforming to tradition and refusing comment, has let it be known that it considers the book a farce. "It is definitely a Soviet operation," says one undercover source. "They released parts of it in various countries to try to make a stir. Most of the people in it are not, and have never been, in the CIA."

TO BE SURE, the book seems to be nothing more than a clumsy attempt to make foreign governments believe every American is a spy.

It is riddled with glaring errors: one man is listed as an active agent although he died in an automobile accident more than three years ago. Employees of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research are included although they have nothing whatsoever to do with the CIA.

But it does contain just enough of a germ of truth to be discomfiting to real spies. The cocktail-party set in Georgetown, Washington's spook-conscious residential area, have made a game of spotting agents' names in the book.

"THE CIA IS buying it, everybody is buying it," says a salesman in Georgetown's Savile Book Shop, which sold out its full stock of the book in one day. "It is obviously considered valid to some extent. Generally speaking, it hits the mark."

"It has even become sort of a social register in reverse—some people who weren't included are upset because they thought they should be."

"Who's Who" first surfaced in Eastern Europe in 1967. The Savile Shop imported the German edition a few weeks ago and then latched onto a couple of hundred

copies of an English edition. They all vanished in a matter of hours. So far, no other book stores have been able to obtain copies.

THE AUTHOR is Dr. Julius Mader, who has a reputation as an East German journalist but who lists his address as West Berlin. Mader is considered by Western officials to be cozy with the Russians, if not directly in their employ. And his admitted reason for publishing the book is not exactly a testimonial to his impartiality:

"North American imperialism," he says, "takes upon itself as the world's policeman, so to speak, to intervene against every democratic, progressive and non-capitalist development all over the world. The socialist states, as history shows, know how to effectively defend themselves against such intervention."

In the triple - think world of Washington, some avid readers are spreading the word that the book is actually a plant by U. S. intelligence forces—an attempt to confuse the other side by feeding it false information.

FOR ALL THE book's anti-Western venom, even Communist book critics have found it difficult to praise the slim volume as suspenseful reading.

One East German reviewer, whimsically combining socialist ideology with capitalistic pragmatism, recommended "Who's Who" because "the volume costs \$2.50 and gives about 2,500 names, making it quite a bargain. It gives you 10 CIA names for every cent of the price."

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